

Stage News and Comment the Playways

More Talk of Broadway

Continued from Preceding Page.

presently expose her grace in a Shubert musical show.

While the Russian troupe fell upon evil days here, another foreign company has had better luck, possibly because they are the only French company now at large here. Mlle. Cecile Sorel and her Gallic associates, despite the fact that their engagement in Boston was viewed with some trepidation by the backers, are said during the past week there to have risen to the heights of \$36,000 in the box office.

For their end of Al Jolson's tour in "Bombo" the Shuberts are said to be welcoming \$13,000 net receipts to their pockets weekly. Generally a manager considers himself fortunate if he can get at the end of each week of a show he has \$2,000 that he can call his own.

Augustin Duncan, having retired as general stage director of Equity Players, will replace Sam Sidman in Aaron Hoffman's comedy, "Give and Take," in which Sam Mann will be at the other receiving end.

Since "Merton of the Movies" caught on so richly, George C. Tyler, who owns the screen as well as the stage rights, has received offers from several big film companies for the privilege of making the silver screen kid itself. One bid went as high as \$30,000, which is fair enough in these days of low film prices. However, Tyler decided to keep Harry Leon Wilson's story out of celluloid, but will allow it to be made into a movie, which will be in about three years, Glenn Hunter will probably be sold down the river with it.

George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly are represented in the Christmas number of the *Bookman*, with an amusing skit on Dickens's "A Christmas Carol," just to prove that the word "indelectable" has no terror for them.

Ethel Barrymore will open in "Romeo and Juliet" at the Longacre Theater around Christmas, and Jane Cowell will appear here a week later at the Selwyn in the same play. New York will have a rush of Shakespeare to the head as a Christmas present.

Billie Burke is due at the Empire Theater about the same time in "Rose Eriq," which recently burst into bloom. Before coming here, however, Miss Burke will see America first, taking the play to Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Detroit.

Meanwhile a situation has arisen around "A Texas Nightingale" that is almost delicate. The office of Charles Frohman, Inc., acknowledges frankly that when this Zoe Akins play was booked there, with Miss Burke's vehicle impending, the management didn't imagine it would have as many performances as a regular opera with music. However, the diverting performance of Jobyna Howland has brought such a wave of unexpected patronage to the house that the Frohman agents are now making diplomatic overtures for another house to warm it during the winter.

For the Frohman firm, Gilbert Miller has exchanged confidences with Salisbury Field, whereby Field's latest comedy, "Zander the Great," will come to earth under the Frohman auspices.

"Lonely Wives," the musical version of the farce which Martin Brown made over from the farce tried out earlier this season, will get sociable with Wilmington on January 4. A. H. Woods will disclose the name of the composer who wrote the music when he gets good and ready. The production is being made in conjunction with George McLeellan, brother of the late playwright, C. M. S. McLeellan, who has the musical comedy urge. He managed to overcome Woods's inertia in this respect. Charles Ruggles is back in his original role, while "Clean Town" is resting for a further trial of strength at the Belmont.

The Passing Shows

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East of Suez	Sept. 21
Spite Corner	Sept. 25
Rose Bernd	Sept. 26
Loyalties	Sept. 27
Thin Ice	Sept. 30
The Yankee Princess	Oct. 2
The Lady in Ermine	Oct. 2
R. U. R.	Oct. 9
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The Fool	Oct. 23
The Last Warning	Oct. 24
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Mrs. Fiske in 'Paddy'

THE dramatic reviewers of Rochester, where Mrs. Fiske opened last Monday in her new play, "Paddy," seem to be united in the belief that this star after several years at last has something. The critic of the Rochester Post is most enthusiastic, though he finds the play a bit awkward at times. He says in part: "The defecation of a woman who is a victim of the morphine habit may appear, on the face of it, a questionable theme, even in these days when, we are told, so many more are addicted to the use of drugs than formerly. But the playwright, whom we unconsciously visualize through the popular fancy, what a refreshing novelty to find a modern playwright who does not seek to manipulate the incontrovertible facts of human existence in a fashion to please the popular fancy. What a refreshing novelty to find a modern playwright who does not seek to manipulate the incontrovertible facts of human existence in a fashion to please the popular fancy."

Mechanically the play has its imperfections and will need a little "doctoring." The first act is too long drawn out with a lot of unnecessary dialogue, and the author takes too much for granted in an audience being generally capable of assuming that all Paddy's eccentricities are due to the morphine habit. The second act, however, is a masterpiece of the dramatic art. It is too subtle, too casual, as presented to be easily communicable.

Mrs. Fiske as Paddy dominates the cast. With her inimitable skill she becomes the very personification of a material evil in its mastery of a naturally noble and generous soul. Defiantly flippant to the very end, and that self is supremely adequate in her collapse with protestations of despair and prayers for pity and pardon, but acting quietly and courageously on the seemingly last gasp of the morphine habit, that of removing her wretched self to make the way clear for others. It was a difficult part, but Mrs. Fiske is still herself and that self is supremely adequate to meet any dramatic need. The members of her supporting cast, notably Roy Gordon, Henry Herbert and Krinita Lascelles, were uniformly good. A clever characterization of an Italian venter was given by Francis Bendaen.

The reviewer for the Times Union likewise harks back glowingly to "Paddy."

Miss Barrett has furnished Mrs. Fiske with a role of extraordinary dimensions—a part so fantastic, so pulsating with vivid vitality and so full of us know it, that it exemplifies, by those very attributes, the inability of fiction to outstrip truth. Just the kind of *Patricia Baird* (Paddy) is Mrs. Fiske and how much is Miss Barrett we do not know. Because of the degree in which Paddy made amazing, fascinating and profoundly pathetic, by the great and inimitable art of the role's interpreter, eclipses the other personages in the play in dialogue and dramatic interest, we are inclined to believe that the larger share in her creation is contributed by Mrs. Fiske, in whose hands Paddy becomes one of the most absorbing studies in all the long and distinguished gallery of her characterizations. An ardent admirer of Mrs. Fiske, who has seen most of her plays, remarked to the writer that he, personally, had to go back to "Paddy" to recall a part in which she had so plumbed the depths of human emotions.

We know of no one with Mrs. Fiske's command of the finesse of acting and who know of no one who could make *Patricia Baird* so compelling a figure as she did last night.

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A scene from the second act of "The Cherry Orchard" as it will be presented here by the Moscow Art Theater in January.

MY DEAR SIR:

A STRANGER'S TRIBUTE.

To the Dramatic Editor:

I saw "To Love" on Saturday night for the third time—and in a discussion at the club, mention was made of the undesired ignoring by your dramatic critic of what almost every one of us agreed was the finest acting that had been seen in New York. The part of the husband, if I remember rightly, was played by Mons. Alexander in Paris last July. The actor here, in the opinion of many who saw the play abroad, is infinitely superior to the creator of the part in Paris.

It would interest me to know, either through the medium of your columns or, if not too much trouble, directly to me, what particular reason your dramatic critic had for ignoring Mr. Trevor's name from his excerpt. I ought to add that I am not acquainted with any member of the cast of the play at the Bijou Theater, all three of whom are immensely popular. E. M. CAVANAUGH, Harvard Club, November 28.

THE BLOOMING MILNE.

To the Dramatic Editor:

Here is some one growing—gloriously, blithely—and I want people to stand up and shout and say, "What! Look at A. A. M.!" He has been giving us the gay insouciant cocky sort of things that make us chuckle and glow and say, "Oh, isn't that priceless!" Now he is doing things to us that are almost bad taste, they are so searching and deep and sad.

"The Lucky One"—though it was written previously to some of his plays that have had production here—seems to me his highest notch. There is the stuff of which great dramatists are made. He has done more than charm us—he has shown us deep into the hearts of those pale brothers, tied down by their difficult relationship.

Probably it hurt Mr. Milne himself to break down these tragic traditional barriers of reserve that hedge the public school manner of England, who has been born and brought up incapable of showing his heart to any living soul. To the best of my knowledge this is the first time such a thing has been attempted on the stage, and I could almost feel the wrench it gave Mr. Milne to be so frank about himself and his charming kind.

This is not a light hearted Milne we have come to know and expect. It is a bigger, more serious Milne, with the

THE SHAKESPEARE URGE.

To the Dramatic Editor:

Living in the country, I know very little of the theaters in New York city except what I read in papers. I understand that nearly all the stars are going to play Shakespeare this season. Will you let me know if there is any truth in the rumor that Mr. Edward Foy is going to play *Macbeth* to Miss Eva Tanguay's *Viola*? BERNARD FAIRFAX, SHAWNEE, Pa., Nov. 28, 1922.

ENGLISH ON THE STAGE.

To the Dramatic Editor:

Is not your correspondent O. O. mistaken in attributing the defective speech of many of the present day actors to laziness? Is not the provincial or uneducated enunciation (also pronunciation), the incorrect accent and alien stress of English speakers, quite unconscious fault? To the director of today, as well as the actor, English is so often an adopted idiom of a native tongue that the cause of English speech which is a torture alike to the English and American ear is surely ignorance of the standard, not the ignoring of it. Directors of this type actually drill their actors in incorrect inflection.

Then, too, much young American talent comes from a class or a locality not distinguished for cultivated speech. Obviously some of the present day actors' training should be supplied, and undoubtedly the town is full of older English and American actors, often lost in obscurity, who can teach this and so much else—both to the really gifted, and the unfortunates who are not. Several of the gifted actors of the profession, let me say, are graduates of the amateur night school of London. Some of them can be pointed to as noble examples for similar aspirants.

They are twos, therefore each is 21 years old. After doing dances at amateur theaters from beginning to end, and tried their luck at an amateur night there. Since they failed to get the hook at several performances they finally succeeded in getting a booking in small-time vaudeville in Boston. After working their way up through the various vaudeville strata they reached the pinnacle by appearing at the Palace, opposite the house where they are playing now.

Two and a half years ago they dropped out at the Winter Garden in "The Passing Show of 1919," their first legitimate show. They were with this for five years. Then they bobbed up in "Apple Blossoms," under Charles Dillingham's management. Their next appearance was with John Charles Thomas in "The Love Letter." After that Dillingham loaned them to Alex. Aaronson to play "For Goodness Sake," last year, and now they have snapped back to his management.

SHUBERTS ARE BUSY.

The Shuberts have been quietly rehearsing a musical comedy, "The Virgin," adapted by Harry B. Smith from a foreign source so that it looks like the Old Dominion during the civil war. That does not mean, however, that it will be cut to ribbons in the American translation.

Charles Richman has come under the Shubert management and has been putting in his spare time the past week with rehearsals of a new comedy.

MISS TOBIN IS BUSY.

Genevieve Tobin is back in town and is already slipping around in a new play for Arthur Hopkins.

MR. ELLINGE IS IN.

Julian Ellinge is going back into vaudeville, now that "The Elusive Lady" escaped from him on tour.

Letters From "The Fool"

Continued from Preceding Page.

This kind of invitation. But there are dozens of personal appeals not answered so easily. "I am a woman of forty-two."

I have come to a point in my life where I must decide between two things that are practically life or death. From seeing your play I know you know what I ought to do. Will you see me? Of course I don't know what she ought to do. Having had views as to the sanity of laying greater stress on spiritual things does not qualify me to determine the course of a woman in desperate trouble. What can a very ordinary middle aged man of exceedingly limited vision reply to a letter like this? There are dozens of the same kind of letters.

What can a very ordinary, middle aged man of exceedingly limited means reply to hundreds of requests for material help? "Do you mean what I say, or do you mean what you want?" I can't help but hear from hundreds of cranks, and from people devoted to some aim or one anti-something creed or another. "The Fool" is full of purity, and ideals, and can do great good in the world. I do wish—and I speak for thousands—you would take out the ugly sensuality of Gilchrist's smoking. A man like this would not smoke. He wouldn't. And "When this noble man lit his pipe in the second act the play was over for me. I didn't believe a word he said after that. Of course, I got over it. I wish you would write me and let me know if you have a pipe to indicate that he was a man, like the rest of us. I described him, in my manuscript, by saying: 'He was a pipe-smoker.' I expect in a 'reformer'-narrowness, or hardness, or anything forbidding." But we have had twenty-two letters from people opposed to the pipe. 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